

City of Petaluma

Proclamation

In recognition of JOHN J. FITZGERALD

WHEREAS, the City of Petaluma would like to recognize and appreciate John J. FitzGerald for being an incredible community partner for over 40 years; and

WHEREAS, a native New Yorker, John grew up in San Francisco, graduating from San Francisco State University with a business degree; following his time in the Army, he began taking civil engineering classes at College of Marin and Heald Engineering College; John moved to Petaluma in 1975, and after receiving his licenses as a Professional Land Surveyor and a Civil Engineer, he opened FitzGerald & Associates in 1979; the company did a great deal of surveying throughout the city over the years; and

WHEREAS, John has been a steadfast advocate for preserving Petaluma's river heritage, contributing significantly to projects such as the restoration of the historic trestle; John has been instrumental in bringing historical vessels, such as the scow schooner Alma, to the Petaluma River Turning Basin, allowing thousands of residents and visitors to experience a tangible piece of Petaluma's maritime history; and

WHEREAS, passionate about the need to educate people about the beautiful and historic Petaluma River, John co-founded the Petaluma River Festival in 1986; from 1986 until 1997 the River Festival's estimated 30,000 annual visitors enjoyed boatloads of fun, food and music, celebrating what John calls "Petaluma's longest park;" and

WHEREAS, an avid community volunteer, he has been an appointed member of many local committees, such as Sonoma County Water Agency Zone 2-A Flood Control Advisory, Petaluma River Access & Enhancement Plan Advisory, Parks, Music and Recreation, Petaluma Chamber of Commerce's River Committee, Central Petaluma Specific Plan Advisory and Petaluma's Development Code Advisory; and

WHEREAS, his peers and fellow citizens have recognized John's unwavering commitment to Petaluma, honoring him with the title of "Petaluma's Good Egg" in 2012, and "Petaluma Citizen of the Year" in 2004, both testaments to his efforts in promoting and preserving the city's rich history and vibrant community spirit; and

WHEREAS, his dedication to the community is further exemplified by his involvement with the Rotary Club of Petaluma Valley for 25 years, and also with Petaluma Historical Library & Museum, where, after retiring in 2011, FitzGerald started volunteering and leading walking tours from the museum to the Petaluma River, sharing his extensive knowledge and passion for the river's history with participants, he delivered lectures on the Petaluma River's history, and participated in events that educated and engaged residents and visitors alike, including helping to reorganize and catalog the collection of early maps of Petaluma and Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, "Fitz" as his friends call him, has volunteered his time in many areas and his efforts have not only preserved the historical and cultural aspects of the Petaluma River but have also fostered a sense of pride and connection among residents, strengthening the community's bond with this vital natural resource; and

WHEREAS, John's unwavering dedication to the betterment of Petaluma serves as an inspiration to all, demonstrating the profound impact that one individual's passion and commitment can have on a community; his legacy of service and advocacy continues to influence the city's development, ensuring that Petaluma's rich history and natural beauty are preserved for future generations to enjoy; we are forever grateful for his contributions and service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Kevin McDonnell, Mayor of Petaluma, along with the members of the Petaluma City Council, do hereby proclaim the 6th of January 2025, as *John J. FitzGerald Day*, in recognition and appreciation for his tireless dedication to our community.

Kevin McDonnell, Mayor

Caitlin Corley, City Clerk